WEAPONIZED CHAOS

FORTIFYING A TOMB

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The historical concept of a regime or ruler deliberately fomenting chaos, conflict, or external danger to consolidate power is an ancient and recurring theme in statecraft, often discussed under terms like "diversionary war," "wagging the dog," or the strategy of "controlled chaos." The core idea is that a perceived crisis, whether manufactured or amplified, can be used to suspend normal politics, unify a populace against a designated enemy, and justify the concentration of authority and suppression of dissent. This maneuver is a tool of political survival, employed across ideologies and epochs when legitimacy is weak and control is slipping.

In the last century alone, we see stark examples... Adolf Hitler's use of the Reichstag fire to create a permanent state of emergency and his relentless targeting of Jews and Bolsheviks to define a unifying enemy for the German Volk; Benito Mussolini's theatrical militarism and invasion of Ethiopia to mask the failures of his fascist economic project; Slobodan Milošević's resurrection of ancient ethnic hatreds to fuel the Yugoslav Wars, diverting from economic collapse and corruption; Robert Mugabe's violent land seizures to redirect anger from his own catastrophic governance onto a historical scapegoat; and in more contemporary debates, figures like Vladimir Putin or Nicolás Maduro accused of orchestrating or exploiting security

crises and foreign conflicts to rally nationalist support and justify authoritarian hardening at home. These cases share a tragic pattern: the deliberate engineering or escalation of societal suffering as a mechanism for extending power.

This historical pattern finds a stark and present-day expression in the actions of Pakistan's current military establishment, a regime whose deepening illegitimacy has prompted a frantic and multifaceted campaign of controlled chaos to suppress a political awakening it can neither comprehend nor counter. The required mobilization for the PTI's call for countrywide protests on February 8th, aimed at securing the release of Imran Khan, has triggered a textbook response from a generalship headed by what is widely perceived as one of the most hated figures in Pakistani history, the army chief.

Their strategy is not one of engagement but of suffocation and diversion, a desperate pantomime of power. First, they orchestrate competing spectacles: in Lahore, a state-sponsored three-day kite flying gala from the 6th to the 8th of February, with 500 buses offering free rides, is a blatant attempt to flood the public sphere with celebratory imagery and offer a sedative of nostalgia to the very Generation Z it fears, hoping to divert energy from protest to festival. Simultaneously, elsewhere they enable a massive rally by Maulana Fazlur Rehman's JUI on the same

critical date, fabricating a facade of political activity and managed dissent, a controlled opposition designed to fracture attention and provide media with an alternative to the narrative of popular resistance.

While these diversions unfold, the apparatus of the state is being weaponized with chilling precision. The Army Chief's address to police officials, bestowing red roses and promises of providing free of cost residential plots, is a naked incentive to transform civil law enforcement into a partisan praetorian guard, encouraging them to "crush the masses" with renewed vigor. In the shadows, more brutal pre-emptive measures are in motion: the entire population of Tirah has been displaced, a scorched-earth tactic to neuter a region of potential support, ensuring zero participation. This is but a preview of the disruptive moves to come... the promised blocking of access routes to the capital, the blacking out of roads and bridges, the midnight raids desecrating the privacy of homes to arrest men and women, a deliberate tactic of terror designed to break the spirit of families and communities before a single protestor can gather.

And underpinning this entire architecture of control is the absurd yet sinister propaganda, circulated through military-related channels, that paints Imran Khan as an Israeli agent. This fabrication is the ultimate discursive weapon, an

attempt to transmute massive popular legitimacy into an existential treason, justifying any and all repression as a national duty.

Yet, this fractured and hollowed-out Pakistan cannot be healed by the hands that broke it. The generals' clumsy parade from colleges to universities, their frantic arming of a tyrannical police force, their perks to corrupt officials, are not the actions of builders but of undertakers. They are fortifying a tomb, not a future. Their scramble toward "Hard State Mode" is the rage of the obsolete, a confession that they can no longer connect, persuade, or lead.

They feel, they know, that the only restoration lies with the promising young Pakistani men and women they fear, and so they reach not for legitimacy, but for bigger guns, preparing in their final, desperate act, to eat their young.

A regime fearing its people will always choose spectacle over substance, diversion over dialogue, and terror over truth. From the Reichstag fire to manufactured rallies and state-sponsored festivals, the playbook of "controlled chaos" is being enacted once more... not to build a nation, but to bury dissent. Yet, a power that must fortress itself against its own youth confesses its own obsolescence.

It builds not a legacy, but a tomb.

...Concluded.

Tailpiece: Farooq Sattar, a senior politician, is seen here being jostled and detained by the Karachi Rangers. This force acts as the vanguard for a fascist military, systematically suppressing the masses and crushing dissent.

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